

TREATING CUSTOMERS FAIRLY POLICY

Huntingdon Area Money Advice (HAMA) is committed to ensuring that our clients are at the heart of all that we do. We are fully committed to providing the highest standards of client service and advice.

HAMA's aim is to ensure we deliver user-friendly, robust, reliable and quality money advice. As a part of our overall approach we are fully committed to treating our clients fairly, giving each client the time and space they need and as such we endeavour to meet both their expectations and requirement of high quality service.

Our treating customers fairly (TCF) policy is based on guidance provided by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to ensure we deliver consistently the best possible outcomes to our clients based on a culture of openness, fairness and transparency. As an advice centre, we take the requirements of the FCA seriously, in particular, the requirement to treat clients fairly.

The FCA outlined six key themes that are central to the TCF initiative:

1. Clients should be confident that they are being helped by an advice centre where treating customers fairly is embedded in the culture
2. Services marketed are done so with the aim that they meet the needs of client and are targeted accordingly
3. Clients should be provided with clear information and are kept appropriately informed before, during and after accessing service provision
4. Where advice is provided, it takes into account a client's individual circumstances
5. The service provided is of an acceptable standard
6. Clients do not face unreasonable barriers to make a complaint

HAMA has set out below how it aims to ensure these principles are embedded in its approach to dealing with its clients. Its service will:

- Ensure the client knows and understands the advice process and understands any expectations or requirements HAMA has regarding clients accessing ongoing advice from us;
- Continually aim to understand the needs of its clients and treat them with dignity and respect;
- Keep its clients regularly informed in a clear and fair manner that is unambiguous and not misleading;
- Ensure its services are delivered with clarity and transparency and do not contain hidden conditions or rely on complex technical definitions
- Ensure there is no conflict of interest between adviser and client. A conflict of interest occurs when circumstances relating to both adviser and client may prevent the adviser acting independently and solely in the interests of that client. In the event that there is a conflict of interest, we will inform our client as soon as we become aware of it and take action to remove it or ask another adviser to take over.
- Make certain its clients understand any implications certain choices may have and work with the client to find the best solution to his or her particular problem;

- Work hard to ensure that all aspects of its service remains clear and prominent at all times; and
- Ensure every client is given advice based on his or her situation and given the time and information the client requires to find sustainable solutions to his or her debt situation.

Our approach:

- Our priority is to provide our clients with an excellent service underpinned by quality and choice. We are committed to ensuring our clients and also our volunteers want to stay with us and would be willing to recommend us to their families and friends.
- Our service is shaped by listening to our clients' needs and understanding what is important to them. We take responsibility for meeting the needs of our clients and always look for ways to improve the quality of our service.
- We aim to treat our clients fairly and deliver high quality services which meet their expectations throughout their relationship with us. We recognise that our volunteers are critical to delivering a positive client experience and ensuring they are treated fairly. Our culture, ethos and values encourage and support all our volunteers working within HAMA in whatever capacity to deliver this.
- All of our volunteer advisers are fully trained to be able to advise clients and understand the importance of treating clients fairly. We are also committed to continually find ways to improve.

Complaints:

- We respond in a timely manner to our clients' and prospective clients' questions and queries, and address any issues or concerns promptly. All customer complaints are dealt with and escalated as appropriate and as required by us in order to meet our obligations to our clients and the requirements under the Banking Ombudsman Service guidelines
- We are happy to provide full details of our complaints procedure on request.

Approved by the HAMA Board of Trustees: 12 June 2018

This policy is in line with the current guidance from the FCA and is in line with the principles of the FCA that *"a firm must pay due regard to the interests of its customers and treat them fairly"*.